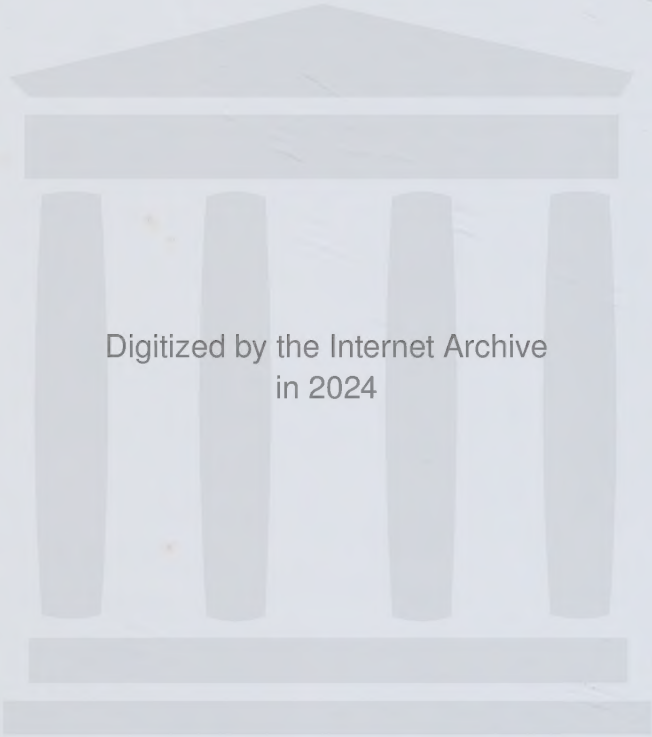
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Kendi Kluber 10/16/78

DISCOVERIES—
A PERSONAL JOURNAL

by

Marian J. Lorenz

To: Kendi

Beauty, love, laughter and delight are imperishable memories; but all that is important about hardship is that is passes on.... So I wish for you the ability to remember the good things and forget the rest, to create new memories and to be sustained by trust and hope and courage; and always try to understand.

Most sincerely
Marian Lorenz
10/12/78

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TO JANE

who helped me find the paths

and

TO WENDY

who supported my journey

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FOREWORD

Discoveries stem from an attempt to put my esistence together. Whether you agree with the ideas or not is immaterial. Cull whatever it is that seems "right" for you. Since they are my experiences and feelings they may not have relevance to others. However, if my thoughts serve to raise your feeling level, you will have gained a new dimension within your life.

Sometime after the initial shock of being asked for a divorce wore off, I began keeping a notebook. In it I jotted down my feelings and thoughts about life. Some discoveries were made in moments with nature as my companion. Others developed out of discussions with family, close friends and acquaintances.

It must be evident that in our daily lives we think and feel about a variety of topics that come jumbling out rather than in a neat book form. This book therefore is imperfect and lacks a certain continuity. I have endeavored to group my thoughts and feelings in some sort of developmental sequence.

Many of my thoughts appear to be or sound like "truths." They are not nor are they meant to be. For who among us has all the answers? Looking over my jottings it all sounds so pat. Yet some of what I expressed is in many ways still conflicted. But this is where

I am now. Perhaps in six months or a year I may throw out, amend or reaffirm these ideas.

After reading through my notebook, one overriding feeling persists. Life is worth the living. All one need do is take the risk and really live. It is my hope that this book will spur you on to get in touch with your own feelings and live life to its fullest.

DISCOVERIES—
A PERSONAL JOURNAL

RANDOM THOUGHTS

I am somewhat like a seed. Sprouting—growing—maturing—and blooming. The speed of my development and the bent of my bloom is in a real sense up to me.

> On the surface, it is all too easy to blame others when I "wither on the vine." But oh, how much energy I expend in deluding myself! It is only when I take responsibility for my own seed do I truly nurture it into a glorious bloom.

All this talk about change. It seems to me that so much of it is no more than that—talk. I prefer to call this phenomenon growth. And growth that is meaningful is not all that easy. It requires commitment and hard work.

Inherent in the term growth is change. When something or someone grows it must change.

> A seed, at first glance, makes dramatic changes from its beginnings to its mature bloom. It truly is a subtle process gently flowing from one level to another. So it is with man.

Change, growth—so beautiful, so adventure filled. Yet we resist! Why? I sometimes feel we would bastardize our feelings and values to maintain the security of the *status quo*.

> Security—how we seek it! Closing our eyes to the stifling atmosphere that a so-called security produces.

The unwillingness to rock the boat—in a large sense denying ourselves all that we may become.

Security is a guise. The world is ever changing. What offers security today may be gone tomorrow, We need to learn to live our life for each day.

We are task- and future-oriented. Somehow this preoccupation with tasks and future do not allow us to stop and smell the flowers along the way.

What is more beautiful and fulfilling than doing nothing more than enjoying nature, our family, our friends? Why do we resist? Why the constant seeking for the ultimate fulfillment? Why must we live for? Why not just live?

Perhaps when we accept on an emotional level, that we cannot control the future—that is God's realm—we will enjoy the here and now.

I think the most realistic attitude for me to have about my future is—"It will be interesting to see what will happen." To live a life for results would be a continual frustration. A perfect person in an imperfect world.

Living a life for results makes one try to control the future. It causes anxiety because life is viewed as a series of exams that may be failed. It produces thoughts of a wasted life.

> I don't want to apologize for what I'm doing. In a sense it makes me feel I must justify my existence. I exist because I am.

So much anxiety is felt because of all the "shoulds" we think we must do. What is so evil about doing what you want?

> Doing what I want makes me feel good. I understand now that my feelings of anger that sometimes are aroused when my responsibilities towards others interfere with doing what I want when I want are not bad. What is important is what I do with these feelings.

No longer is there guilt when I say no. Saying no is not a sign of not caring. But rather a sign that I care enough to care about myself.

> HAPPINESS—another endless search. Are we so busy searching that we fail to realize when we are happy?

True happiness comes from within. Things or people can contribute to that happiness. But one's own happiness is one's own responsibility,

If you charge another person with your happiness you're in for disappointment. You have no right to expect another person to live up to your standards and ideals.

You can need another, you can complement another, you can support another. However, you cannot belong to another. People are not property—you belong to yourself.

FREEDOM—another search. Seeking to be free. Free from what?

True freedom is an inner thing. If we think we are bound by our "shoulds" we are merely deceiving ourselves. It's our choice and we are unwilling to take the risk to give up these outer demands.

To deny your past is to deny a part of yourself. But the past need not bind you. The past has no magical control over the present or future.

Why the preoccupation with the "real" me? Real is where you are right now.

Real is willingness to take risks. To allow life to happen without making demands upon the future.

"Real" is knowing that your feelings will not betray you. Feelings are not good or evil. Feelings are real. And what is important is what you do with your feelings.

Evasion is a form of cowardice. It keeps us from getting close to others.

> Why do we keep at a distance from others? Why are we frightened by getting close to another?

I think about Wendy and know how fortunate I am that we are friends. I think of all those who resist close friendship. It makes me sad.

> Maybe someday they will be able to take the risk involved in getting close to another. What a joy awaits them! A whole new and beautiful dimension added to their life!

Just as we resist forming new ties so do we resist breaking old ones. But of course, it's familiar and we're comfortable with it. It provides us with a sense of security. So we block out the feelings of destructiveness this relationship produces.

> When I reflect upon my ended marriage I think—What was it all for? What were the sixteen years of caring worth? Wasn't it supposed to be "happily ever after?"

But I realize that is putting demands upon the future.

> It was worth ten years of happy caring and sharing. It budded a lovely blossom. It was good, it was bad. It was happy, it was sad. But all that matters is that it was.

AN ESSAY

Christmas is a season for loving and remembering. But this Christmas season of 1974 scared me a little. It seemed alien—just going through the motions. It lacked the sparkle and glow of Christmases past.

I can shut my eyes and still describe the Christmas of 1958. Married all of five days and oh, so poor! But what a joyousness. No tree, just a basket, balloon and ribbons fashioned into a time-past flying machine to hold our gifts. Gifts—mere trinkets, but oh, what they implied—the blush of young new love. No tangible symbols of the season just the hope, trust and confidence of two young people so in love, ready to take on the world.

Now, sixteen years later the joy is gone. The symbols of the season are present; wrappings, tree, wreath, candles, bells, the *crêche*, fruitcake, pies and puddings, cookies and candies. All overshadowed by another woman, a separation, a return without love. A waiting—a waiting for a decision that whatever it may be will change my life. Am I ready for it? Can I cope with it?

I ask myself, What happened? What changed the blush of young love into the loss or lack of mature love? Is knowing why going to help or will we be able to recapture the joy we once knew in sharing our lives? At this time I have no answer. Or rather not one that I can accept on an emotional level.

But then I realize that Christmas is a journey of the heart, a time to rekindle love and friendship. A time to remember and look to the future with hope in your heart. For isn't that why Christ was born?—to give hope to man! Yes, even this year the presents will have the implication of love. Which is the real meaning of both the gift and the giving.

On this Christmas morning I look around and behold I discover that it is not alien. That there is sparkle and joy. It comes from within. Yes, there is joy in my life. I see it as I remember my friends and their care and compassion for me. I feel it when I think of how my parents guided me and had faith in my abilities. But, most of all I see and feel it emanating from my fifteen-year-old daughter. It's there for all to see—the love, joy and exuberance of youth. It is then I realize that my life can always have fulfillment, sparkle, peace and joy. For you see these things come from within—and I have the key to unlock them.

SUMMER'S END

Summer's end is approaching and the trees are getting ready to don their multi-colored array. Somehow at this time in my life I feel very close to the nature of autumn. The crisp anticipatory air is reflected in my activities.

For me autumn not only marks the end of a summer but also the beginning of a new year. September calls me back to my retarded children to begin anew. More so than ever the anticipation is beckoning and promising an exciting school year.

Somehow a peace and calm has come over me. The feeling of not fitting in, just hanging around, vague anxiety are gone. It seemed fitting to go through my notebook and seek out the changing point.

What did my search yield? Certainly not a definitive statement that enabled me to say, "Ah-ha! So that's the reason!" But rather time weaving its healing web and realizing that I've only just begun to live. Discovering new by-ways and rediscovering long forgotten ones.

In sharing my growing awareness of myself with you I hope to encourage you in your journey to get in touch with yourself. For until you know and like yourself it is difficult to get close to others. In many ways that's what life is all about—the marvelous discoveries about yourself and a true sharing with others who care.

Feelings can be very complicated but they can be shared.

Feelings are at times ambiguous. Opposing feelings can exist at the same time towards the same person or thing.

I have suffered the familiar grief, the longing and frustration associated with losing a loved one. But now I feel as though I've emerged from my dark tunnel and come into the sunshine.

But, I can't help but wonder as the days pass, plodding along toward the final decree: Am I really in the sunshine?

Even though I basically feel good about myself, sometimes my self-esteem is not all that it could be. Sort of periods of self-doubt.

I find myself in a period of sadness. Is this period one of self-doubting?

A part of my being still cares for him and doesn't want the divorce. Yet most of me knows it has to be.

But . . .
it's essentially the me of some
time ago that loves a him of
another time.

Yes, feelings are very complicated.

I do feel good about myself. I have confidence in my abilities to make it alone as a single woman.

Deep down I know when the divorce comes it will cause some sadness. But I've done my mourning and I believe I really am in the sunshine.

I think the key that unlocked the door of the dark tunnel was when I stopped defining myself in terms of others. Somebody's wife, somebody's mother.

Yes, a part of me was somebody's wife. Another part of me is somebody's mother. But the biggest part is me. A unique individual with my own needs and desires.

Why do we sometimes let the way we're supposed to feel interfere with the way we really feel? I know people who see and feel the way others have told them to. How sad!

But . . . Who told the tellers?

I'm no longer tormented by self-doubt when well meaning people say—"I can't understand how you can feel that way." All that is important is that I understand or simply accept my feelings.

Sometimes I don't feel adequate alone and I want to. But then I wonder. . . .

Does anyone feel adequate at all times?

Questions I have asked myself and still ask and perhaps should always ask . . .

What do I want?

What do I expect?

What will I settle for?

The answers change.

I know one can't always have what one wants.

Life does not exist in a vacuum. We are all deeply affected by the tenor of the times in which we live.

At times it seems as though we try to introduce complexity into the simplest of tasks.

Why is it some people find it so easy to say . . . "That's a great idea, let's get to work" and others can only tell you the multitudinous reasons why it won't work?

No one can do your growing for you. No one save you can be responsible for your pain or pleasure.

Yet, when you care for someone you would like to spare them the pain of growing. But when you really care for another the loving way to show it is to give them enough room to grow.

Erikson called it life-space and each of us needs it.

I can't help but wonder if we approve of our children's behavior too easily. By our easy approval we have removed much of the grounds for adolescent rebellion. Maybe even give the message we do not care very much.

Adolescent rebellion is an important developmental stage. It helps a person define himself. It lets him try out his wings in a secure spot.

Helping Beth plan for college I was transported back many years. I thought about myself and college. For me, college opened up a whole new world—a world I didn't know existed. My relationship with Allan opened up the world even wider—that was good.

I wonder what direction my life's journey would have taken had I not met Allan. But that is in the class of what if.

Summer's end is approaching. Somehow a peace and calm has come over me. The feelings of not fitting in, just hanging around, vague anxiety are gone. Perhaps it's because having stopped searching for happiness—happiness has found me.

At first glance it would seem this feeling of happiness appeared like a bolt out of the blue. Not so—it was more like winter slowly turning into spring.

> A result of beginning to please myself. Reintroducing myself to music and nature. Exercising my creative bent. Letting myself get close to others.

A reaching out and a willingness to let others lean on me. A true sharing of feelings.

> My divorce has come and gone. By trying to avoid pain I created anxiety. But once I let the feelings out and suffered the hurt—things became clearer.

What came to mind dancing up from my subconscious forming over the weeks was . . .

Disloved
In toto
Vows
Of
Real
Commitment
Exchanged
Decades, almost two, ago . . .

Legally divorce is a dehumanizing process. Insensitive and unfeeling. Sort of—sweep that part of your life into the garbage can and close the lid.

One feels like an automaton—going through some alien ritual.

Although the essence of marriage had ended long ago, the actual legal ending evoked painful memories. Memories and feelings that had to be dealt with and reworked.

It was a time of sadness and ending.

Yet, an ending also means a beginning and all beginnings are difficult, But growth and change require beginnings.

For me the worst thing that could happen would be to become static—to stop growing.

I have discovered I am lonely when I fail to respond to the world around me.

I have noticed there is a decreasing tendency to compare myself with others and an overcoming of trying to please everyone.

> Now I am completely responsible for myself. It's wonderful! I'm doing things that as part of a couple never seemed "right."

There are some parts of being single that I hate. But for the most part it's exciting.

> I had a moratorium and self-examination. Now I'm no longer willing to let others define me or take care of me.

I've come to realize that the choices I've made are not irrevocable. Change is possible. It may require value re-clarification and hard work—but it's possible.

> I feel as though I've struck a medium between a safe structure and the urge to explore. A consistency of self. A feeling of not being locked-in.

Today, I did something I haven't done in a long time, perhaps years—reaching out to touch a stranger.

> The simple act of providing comfort left me with a warmth. Isn't that what life is all about—being in touch with yourself so that you can risk getting in touch with others?

JANE

In our society, where tradition and ritual have become *passé* and people are letting it all hang out or doing their own thing, we seem to be running off in all directions. We are out of touch with ourselves. We respond, instead of initiate. There seems to be a sense of isolation and anxiety while we search hither and yon for self and happiness.

In our search for self and happiness which I suspect many feel comes from external things, we tend to emulate the *now* people, famous due to whatever fad is in. Yet, psychologists tell us that hero worship is a necessary and good thing. My question is why not have a "real" person for a sort of hero? Or if you prefer a mentor—a person who cares.

In many ways one's parents can be classified in the category of certainly among the most significant people in our lives. Hopefully, through their gentle but firm guidance one will be prepared to cope effectively with adult life and take advantage of potential to attain fulfillment and personal security.

For some of us, for whatever reasons, we chance to meet another significant person. In my case it turned out to be the most remarkable woman I have ever known a woman who, in today's vernacular, has it all together.

Our initial meeting was on a professional basis. After a period of time the professional relationship has given way to a deep and unusual friendship. It never ceases to inspire me that in this world where there is so little caring for our fellows that there is a Jane. A woman committed to caring. A woman able to handle her own life with its cares and worries and maintain a truly wonderful and heartwarming attitude towards those who come in contact with her.

This would be a happier and healthier world if everyone could know a Jane.

THANKS

It takes a lot of people to produce a book. Ideas are gathered from reading, talking to people and simply living. I wish to thank all who have encouraged me in my endeavor and all my unknown friends who have shared their feelings with me through their books.

A very special thanks to a very special couple—my parents. Their guidance and understanding enabled me to develop into a mature woman willing to take the risks of living.

My thanks to all who have touched my life in one way or another and sparked the creative process. To Paul, whose support and suggestions were valuable in that they often prompted me to search below the surface.

A special thanks to Ron and Wendy for through their care for me I have come to believe in myself.

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